

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a field location of the Processed Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent serves as an Agricultural Commodity Aid (Processed Fruit and Vegetable) in a processing plant or laboratory and performs a variety of routine tasks related to sampling and the determination of the quality and condition of processed food products.

II. MAJOR DUTIES

The employee performs one or more of the following tasks:

Draws official samples of all types of processed fruit and vegetable products in warehouses, plants, freezers, freight cars, trucks, vessels, and similar locations. Selects representative samples from all parts of the lot.

Samples in remote locations and handles problems where ready access to the supervisor is not possible. Decides when more than the usual number of samples are needed and exercises good judgment and discretion in determining how far to deviate from normal procedures (e.g., condition of containers is such as to warrant deviation from normal sampling procedures).

Performs related duties such as case stamping and assists in checkloading and examination for condition of container.

Makes partial inspections and observations of air and product temperatures, physical characteristics of the storage, etc.

Prepares related papers indicating date, time involved, and expense incurred, name of product, size of container, type of case, number of cases in a lot, number of samples, location of lot, and other pertinent information.

Performs assignments in the office, laboratory, or processing plant, such as making partial inspections including various objective and subjective analyses and determinations. The latter includes mold counts, filth analyses, color comparisons, size or count determinations, separating ingredients in multi-component products, noting percentage of obvious major and minor defects, analyzing samples for inspection, taking and recording weights, recording data (such as code marks, label nomenclature, score points), and maintaining equipment.

May supervise lower graded Aids during sampling, checkloading, etc.

III. FACTORS

Factor 1. Knowledge Required by the Position

Thorough knowledge of and skill in applying the regulations and procedures for sampling, checkloading, and performing laboratory analyses.

Skill in observing environmental conditions of the processing and storage areas.

Skill in making objective and subjective analyses of commodities.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls

The Aid is under the supervision of a higher graded Agricultural Commodity Grader. The employee independently carries out routine assignments which involve conditions and methods familiar to the Aid and for which he/she has been thoroughly trained. Recurring technical problems are resolved on the basis of the Aid's previous experience. Unusual problems, questions, or conflicts are referred to a supervisor. Work is periodically reviewed for accuracy and conformance to instructions.

Factor 3. Guidelines

The incumbent follows prescribed regulations and instructions concerning sampling, testing, etc. However, the Aid uses experienced judgment when the situation seems to warrant deviation from the standard procedures.

Factor 4. Complexity

The incumbent performs the necessary routine tasks prior to inspection of the product by the Grader and may supervise some lower graded Aids. In the absence of a supervisor, the Aid needs to consider when deviations from normal procedures are necessary.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect

The purpose of the Aid's work is to assist the Agricultural Commodity Grader by performing routine tasks before the product is graded and inspected. The accuracy of the Aid's work directly affects the reliability of the final detections and certificates issued by the ACG. These determinations affect the product's price and/or acceptability in relation to contract specifications which, in turn, affect the financial interests of buyers and sellers.

Factor 6. Personal Contacts

The Aid has contacts with some plant and industry personnel, mainly quality assurance and warehouse people, graders, and Area Office personnel.

Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts

The personal contacts are for the purpose of exchanging information relative to the sampling, checkloading, lab work, etc. being done.

Factor 8. Physical Demands

The Agricultural Commodity Aid work may require periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing up to 50 pounds. There are prolonged periods of standing, walking, stooping, and bending. The Aid must be able to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color.

Factor 9. Work Environment

The work environment includes exposure to freezing temperatures, slippery surfaces, moving materials, handling equipment, high noise level and similar risks typical of processed fruit and vegetable processing plants and storage areas.